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Gospel Lifestyle

*Living as Sent Ones Where
We Live, Work, and Play*

Life is a series of decisions we make as we navigate our time in the world. Every day, we're faced with thousands of choices, most of them small and seemingly insignificant: *Do I wake up with my alarm, or hit the snooze button and sleep in? What should I wear? Do I eat eggs or cereal for breakfast? Drive, or take the bus? Should I stop for coffee on my way to work? Do I talk to my co-workers, or just let them work?* These questions lead to decisions.

Our philosophy of life—our perspective on what our purpose is, who we are, why we're here, and what's important—affects the decisions we make and how we feel about those decisions. As God's people, God's mission should inform every choice we make. Because we've been sent, our lifestyle matters.

People need to see in us an example of what their life might be like if they were in Christ. There isn't a special formula for

how to accomplish this, but we must pursue a way of living that demonstrates to others that there is something different about the way we go about our everyday lives. I (Larry) think back to difficult seasons of my life, and I know that during the tough times, I had this solid foundation of Christ and a complete and utter dependence on him. We typically do okay when we are in the difficult situations because we know we cannot do it. It is the everyday grind, however, that sometimes leads me into a certain self-sufficiency that creates a brute independence within me. Jesus when teaching the disciples to pray says “give us this day, our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11, ESV). It is our day-in and day-out dependence on God that translates to people seeing how we live our lives in normal situations and asking, “What is it that makes them this way?”³

If we see our identity as those sent on mission to live with intentionality in proclaiming the Good News to those we know (and to those we don’t know!), we must have an utter dependence on God in all that we do.

One of the easiest ways to determine whether we are living intentionally is to look at the criteria we use to make major life choices. When we’re faced with big decisions, what do we take into account? In our list of pros and cons, which factors hold the most weight for us? Most Christians don’t receive sufficient instruction from their churches about how to approach big decisions like going to college, getting married, buying a home, choosing a career path, parenting—and many other decisions

3. Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies*, May 8 (Nashville: Crossway Books, 2014).

like these. Perhaps it's because we don't always see the value in these decisions for the mission of God's church. But for God's people on mission, these "everyday" things matter!

Kingdom Values: Living with the Mission in Mind

The world tells us to make decisions around our preferences, safety, comfort, and convenience. We're encouraged to think about our own status in society and to amass as much stuff as we can get. Students are expected to go to the best school they can get into (whether or not they can afford it!). We're encouraged to buy the biggest house for the lowest price in the nicest neighborhood. Society tells us to marry someone to whom we're sexually attracted. There's a social ladder to climb, hobbies to enjoy, and many ways to avoid boredom. Most of the time, though, Christians don't think any differently than the world about these items. *But the decisions we make in our everyday life matter!*

For God's people, mission should be the filter through which we make major life decisions. Compared to the world's approach to decision making, kingdom values are often the opposite. Take the following examples of the world's approach and let's see how they line up with the gospel:

Safety. Just before sending out his disciples on a short-term mission trip, Jesus reminded them that he was sending them, "Like lambs among wolves" (Luke 10:3). Our mission is spiritually and physically dangerous. Our safety is not our highest priority.

Instead of thinking primarily about our own personal safety and wellbeing, gospel intentionality would lead us to look at obedience and following Jesus, wherever he leads, knowing that he promises to be with us.

Of course, Christians should try to be safe. But sometimes, we need to prioritize the wellbeing of others over our own personal safety. This is why missionaries will move to difficult and dangerous places at great personal risk in order to take the gospel to those who haven't heard it. This is why God's people move into rough neighborhoods to be agents of hope when it seems like everyone else moved out long ago.

Comfort. In Matthew 16:24–25 Jesus makes it clear that following him will not be comfortable: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (ESV). Instead of thinking primarily about our comfort, gospel intentionality leads us to making choices that help us embrace the awkward and difficult path of self-denial, where we think of others first, not ourselves first.

The world bombards us with messages that elevate our comfort over everything else. We're encouraged to spend inordinate amounts of money to maintain a constant state of comfort, whether it's our shoes, our cars, or our beds. But the mission to which we've been called—making disciples across cultural barriers large and small—is necessarily uncomfortable. Often when we read the Great Commission found in Matthew 28, we become fixated on “making disciples,” but the passage actually says “make disciples of the nations,” which gives every believer

a Great Commission responsibility. This is true whether we live abroad or stay in our neighborhoods. Our obedience in God's mission requires physical, social, and emotional discomfort. But he's worth it!

Convenience. Jesus instructs us to go above and beyond what we are required to do when he says, "And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles" (Matt. 5:41, ESV). Instead of thinking primarily about our convenience and schedule, gospel intentionality leads us to create enough margin in our lives that we have room for the unexpected.

At the heart of our society's fixation on convenience is pride. The world says we shouldn't have to go out of our way for anything. Being bored, having to talk to strangers, waiting for delivery, getting out of our cars—these are all inconveniences that our culture says we shouldn't have to endure! But the very call of Christ is inconvenient. We put extra effort into life in order to seek those in need and interject ourselves into the lives of others in order to bring the gospel to the world around us.

Value. Over those who might have donated more to the Temple, Jesus praises the widow who gave all she had and trusted God's provision: "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:3–4, ESV).

Instead of thinking primarily about getting the most "bang for our buck"—getting the most stuff or the best service for as little money as possible—God's people must look at things from a more eternal perspective. We invest time and money

into people and places that may not obviously provide much value to us. After all, we're not stewarding resources that actually belong to us; instead, we have been entrusted to make investments into the kingdom with time, resources, and gifts that have been loaned to us by God himself.

Social status. Contrary to the way the world may see it, Jesus teaches us that his kingdom works in an upside-down way: "The last will be first, and the first last" (Matt. 20:16, 26-27, ESV). Instead of thinking primarily about our social status, gospel intentionality leads us to be more concerned about serving than about what others think of us.

Christians cannot live like the world lives. In Christ, we content ourselves in obscurity, give generously, consider others over ourselves, expect suffering, and rejoice in persecution. We do this because we are not our own; we are his. How we live matters because the world is watching us. What they know about Jesus is what they see in those who claim to be his followers. We don't think like the world tells us to think; we look to Christ, who often leads us to make decisions that don't necessarily make sense to our neighbors.

It's important to note that it's not only big decisions that affect our mission; the small decisions of everyday rhythms add up to either put us on the front lines of God's mission or to separate and isolate us so much that we have little to no access to those to whom we've been sent. The smaller, everyday things, like becoming a "regular" at a restaurant, developing intentional shopping routines, and nurturing relationships can all serve to put us in the position to share the gospel frequently where we live, play, and work.

“Mapping” the Mission

Before we describe how to live the gospel lifestyle in these areas of our lives, let’s talk about mapping, which is something we’ve both learned is essential for effectively living on mission. Recently my wife, Susan, and I (Larry) moved to Madrid, Spain. We live downtown in a large urban area. We have lived in this city before, so a great danger for us has been to assume we know everything, to pretend we’re locals. So much has changed over the last few years, even though most things initially appear the same. Our key to effectively reentering this culture has been to focus on intentionality—where we live, work, and play. I’m proud of the book Caleb and I wrote, *Tradecraft: For the Church on Mission*, because we had fun writing it and many people have found it helpful.⁴ This book includes a chapter on “Mapping” where you live, which is designed to help you discover, record, and organize physical, social, and spiritual insight about your ministry environment.

One thing I’ve learned about mapping my city is to pay attention to everything. I constantly make notes on my phone, in my journals, and even on maps in order to remember important aspects about the area that I want to engage. In doing this, I am able to remember names better, remember where I have had important conversations, and remember places where people gather, to name just a few. I am constantly trying to learn as

4. Caleb Crider, Larry McCrary, Rodney Calfee, and Wade Stephens, *Tradecraft for the Church on Mission* (Louisville, KY: Upstream Collective, 2017).

much as I can about the people and places in my neighborhood. I ask questions of locals to learn about the culture. I read local papers and attend local events in my area to be able to dig deeper into the understanding of the people who live in our section of the city.

I had the chance to practice these exploration skills one time when I was actually in a country in the Middle East to teach them to others. A huge storm blew through, and I was stranded for a day without my host in a place where it does not normally snow. No one could get to me, and I had the day to myself. I could either sit in my hotel room or go out into the neighborhood, where I did not know the language or the layout of the area. To be totally honest, I needed coffee, so that was also a motivating factor. Even though I was intimidated by this new and foreign place, I went out anyway. I started close to my hotel, and throughout the day, I would make little journeys farther and farther away. Each time, I asked the Lord to put me in contact with people with whom I could communicate. I prayed peace upon every place I entered. I found the people very encouraging and hospitable. As the day went on, I learned more and more, but one thing stuck with me, and I wrote it in my journal as I reflected on that day: "I do not need to travel 2,500 miles away from my home to do this."

There were people in my own neighborhood back home in Louisville, Kentucky, that I needed to meet. I needed to put into practice these very skills wherever I found myself, not just on a trip during which I was teaching about it. This realization totally changed the way I viewed my life. Instead of always seeking the address of a far-away place, I knew that the gospel

was needed wherever people were present. Wherever I am located—whether for a day or for a season—the intentional choices that I make can bring light to a dark world.

We have learned it does not matter the ZIP code we live in; we can always be intentional about our witness to the gospel of Jesus. It does not matter what vocation we fulfill; we are all called to be salt and light in all things. It does not matter what recreational activities that we are involved in because we can all be ambassadors for Christ in all things we do. We talk about this in terms of where we “live, work, and play,” and what follows is a brief description of gospel intentionality for each of those areas of life.

Intentionality in Where We Live

As I (Larry) mentioned above, I have a day job in the consulting sector, where I have to make special efforts to meet new neighbors. Since we do not have a car (which is intentional for us), we walk or take public transit everywhere. When it comes to shopping, we only buy what we can carry. That means we had to choose to live where we could easily access these stores, gyms, parks, and other places. Plus, we find that we do not eat as much since we don't want to haul the heavy groceries. That is a win in its own right!

A temptation for us is to just order groceries online and have them delivered to our apartment, but we want to be out among the people. Each time we go out, we try to intentionally engage in conversation with the people we encounter. That means we have found different places around our apartment to shop:

- Bread Store. There's a bakery just around the corner. Of course, we could buy bread at the supermarket when we buy all our other groceries, but our bakery provides us the opportunity to talk to the baker or the shop attendant or both. And the bread is delicious!
- Coffee Shops. I brew coffee at home, but by frequenting local coffee shops, I've been able to get to know the baristas, roasters, and owners of several local coffee shops. I love coffee, especially trying different coffees from around the world. With my coffee experience, it's a natural way for me to strike up a conversation.
- Flower Shop. I'm not a big flower buyer, but my wife seems to appreciate receiving them! Though I am a slow learner, I have finally caught on to the fact that buying flowers for my wife even when it is not a special occasion is a good idea. I try to talk to the florist about flowers and how to care for them.
- Meat Market. There is a butcher shop near our house. While it's much easier for me to go into the supermarket and buy pre-packaged meat—and to be honest, I do that sometimes!—I can cultivate a relationship with the butcher when I go in and explain what I need.
- Fruit and Vegetable Store. I love fruit, and like with the flowers, my wife loves nothing more than fresh blueberries and raspberries. Being able to pick these out enables conversations with the attendant at the fruit stand.

This describes our urban context. We enjoy the benefit of living in a very “walkable” area with thousands of people within a reasonable distance.

How about you? What does your context look like? You may live in a rural area or a suburban area or some other sort of city context. Do you think intentionally about the errands you need to run? Do you go to the bank and interact personally with someone? Or do you do all of your banking online? What about your children's sporting or art activities? Are you able to talk it up with other parents? If you feel overwhelmed thinking about what your life would look like if you did everything relationally, that's not what we're saying. Perhaps God will call you to a radical lifestyle, but we're asking these questions to challenge you to think this way about *some aspects of your life*.

When we start making intentional everyday choices, we can interact with more people. This comes with certain costs. It will most likely cost more to shop local; it takes more time to do this too because I have to go to several places each day. But the opportunities far outweigh the cost for me. Without these daily intentional decisions, I would not have nearly the number of relationships I have where I live. Where we live often overlaps with where we work, which is just as important to consider.

Intentionality in Where We Work

My wife and I (Larry) both work in the marketplace: my wife helps families find the best schooling options for their children, and I coach people to live cross-culturally. Our work involves travel, so we are often out of town. We both have training events that we put together. We also do a lot of online meetings, and of course, email—*lots* of email. These tasks keep our days full. But we also want to be involved in the work environments of our city.

We actually *could* do our jobs solely from our apartment. In some ways, that would be much easier. We try to work in communal office spaces as much as possible, though. That means we are always on the lookout for more public spaces to do our work so we can be around others and participate in the business community. Most often, that basically means frequenting many of the same coffee shops to do our work. We also decided to rent a desk in a large co-working space in order to be a part of a creative and entrepreneurial community.

I love talking with American Christians back home in the United States. It helps me better understand the cultural climate of the churches that Upstream partners with. Usually, people will tell us what they do for a living. Right away, we can usually tell whether people like their jobs, because they'll respond with statements like, "Thank God it's Friday," "Back to the grindstone," or "I can't complain." We love to ask these folks, "How did you decide to take the job you're working?"

Their answers show the lack of intentionality that's common among those outside of Christ: "The pay is pretty good," they say, as though money was the most important factor in their career choice. When we hear, "I've been with this company for years now," that tells us that they're comfortable, lazy, fearful, or all of the above. "What else am I going to do for a living?" reveals how little creativity people might put into decisions about the workplace. All these responses betray a lack of intentionality in our work. As Christians we are called to redeem this lack of intentionality by thinking clearly and purposefully about where we work. When we do, we'll add value and shine brightly as salt and light.

Intentionality in Where We Play

My wife and I enjoy recreation. We can all enjoy recreation for obvious reasons: it's fun, healthy, and offers a good reason to just be out and be active. We think having hobbies is important for our souls and physical wellbeing. Certain popular activities here, like rock climbing, cycling, and soccer, aren't natural fits for us. But there are other things that we love to do. The key has been finding where those things align within this culture.

For example, in our free time, we love to run, work out, drink coffee, eat, appreciate art, and explore history. Perhaps you can relate to some of these activities. Or you have some of our own favorites. Where do you "play" when you have down time? Have you ever thought about how the places you "play" can be an intentional choice that you make that can have gospel opportunities? As a couple, my wife and I have been working to join the appropriate spaces where our neighbors do these things. When we find such spaces and jump in, our souls are refreshed even while we are naturally connecting with our neighbors. This simply wouldn't happen without intentionality.

We find that by "joining in" the existing groups, organizations, events, and activities, we are able to focus on the renewal of ourselves and relational aspect of our activity instead of trying to organize an event or group by creating it. Anything you create you must maintain. Much easier to just join something that is existing. This way, we can come alongside nonbelievers, who have their own motivations, and share how Christ is the motivation for all that we do.

Several years ago, I (Caleb) was part of a team that sought to establish a gospel presence in a Western European city. Being that we were surrounded by artists and creative entrepreneurs, we thought opening our own coffee shop and gallery space would be an ideal way to engage with our community. So we set to work making plans, casting vision, and raising the many dollars we needed to get started.

In order to demonstrate to our financial investors that our plan would be an effective way to develop and strengthen our connections to the community, we decided to prove the concept by spending more time in local coffee shops that filled a similar niche to the one we wanted to engage. We spent lots of time in one particular coffee shop located in a bustling pedestrian zone in the center of town. We held every meeting there, rented out a section for family parties, and drank lots of coffee. We collaborated with the owners of the coffee shop to display local artists' work on the walls and to hold a big opening night reception at the beginning of the limited-time display. The artist community came out and celebrated with us, and we had many opportunities to share the gospel with them.

Eventually, we had raised enough money to secure the lease on a storefront and begin renovation on our own coffee shop. But by that point, we realized that we didn't actually need to open our own coffee shop at all! Local shops rented and maintained their own space, made and served coffee, and cleaned up afterward. We didn't necessarily want those overhead hours if we didn't need them. We also saw how our work could bring in customers and help establish a local coffee shop's reputation in its neighborhood. Rather than invest all the necessarily time,

money, and resources to start our own business, we could just continue on with our “meantime” model of building mutually-beneficial relationships with these local business owners. Our goal (building community) complemented their goal (selling coffee) in a way that freed us up to focus on what we did best. Solid partnerships provided all the benefits of having our own coffee shop but without the overhead, cost, and risk of starting a business (as much as we were willing to do whatever it took).

Of course, there was risk involved in this new model too. By partnering with us, the local coffee shops risked being associated with our agenda to make disciples in our city. We had to be careful not to take advantage of our hosts, or to negatively impact their business. But in the end, we learned a lesson: sometimes, it’s better to join existing efforts in the city than to try to start your own.

Hopefully these examples of how to live intentionally where we live, work, and play have given food for thought as you think through your specific context.

Practical Ideas for Intentional Relationships

As you learn to be intentional with the gospel, we know the importance of practical ideas. So we have listed the most essential ideas we’ve found to be helpful. Remember that while focusing on intentionality and “being vs. doing,” we can all run the risk of having a strictly theoretical conversation that becomes more about what we *intend* to do rather than what we *actually* do. But our intentions are worthless if they don’t result in action!

Principles of Intentionality

We're going to start with principles and then move into practices. Keep these principles in mind as we consider practical ways to build disciple-making relationships:⁵

Pray, then watch. Culture is a powerful (and dangerous!) thing. We must approach it with great care. Be sure to spend much time in prayer before you venture out to study culture. Ask God to allow you to see things from his perspective. Ask him to reveal biases and sin in your own life that may hinder your ability to understand and relate to people.

Don't go alone. In order to support his people as you experience the real danger of living in the world, God has placed you and every other Christian into a church. Our spiritual community provides help, encouragement, and accountability as we wade into culture to make disciples. Whether you're sharing the gospel with people on the street or conducting online demographics research, never do it alone.

Humbly observe. Watching people for an afternoon doesn't mean you understand them. Try avoiding assumptions as you go to a public place and watch people go about their business. Take note of what you see: How do people carry themselves? How do they relate to one another? What seems to be important to them? What obvious signs of sin and idolatry can you see?

5. Caleb Crider, *Know Your Culture: 6 Keys to Good Cultural Exegesis*, <https://www.imb.org/2017/08/23/know-your-culture-6-keys-to-good-cultural-exegesis/>.

Ask questions. In order to understand people, we need to talk to them. Ask them about what they believe and why they believe it. People tend to enjoy being asked about themselves, so asking open-ended questions generally yields great discussions, in our experience. When you combine what people say with what you observe them doing, you can really get a good sense of who they are.

Take notes. Studying something as complex and dynamic as culture can be overwhelming. Use a notebook, laptop, or mobile device to record your observations. Sometimes, it isn't until you review your notes that you start to see connections, opportunities, and challenges for gospel ministry. Sharing your notes can be a great way to collaborate with others in the study of culture, by the way!

“Join in” . . . carefully. The saying “When in Rome, do as the Romans do” only partially applies to God’s people on mission. We must take great care not to participate in sin, which would undermine our great message. But we should adapt to the cultures in which we find ourselves. Things like using local language, removing our shoes at the door to someone’s home (or kissing anyone we’re introduced to!)—whatever your people accept as normal so long as it doesn’t cause you to sin—will pave the way for gospel conversations that point people to Jesus.

With these principles in mind, here are a few simple ways to move a relationship into the deeper, more personal sort of connection that allows you to share the gospel in a way that also demonstrates the Good News.

Practices of Intentionality

1. Recognizing the “second setting.” I (Larry) have fond memories of dropping off our children at school every morning (although they’re grown now). We could do this because although we lived in an urban environment, our house was within walking distance from the school that our children attended. Either my wife or I would do the walk. We used this time to pray with and for them as we approached the school. Once we arrived, our children would take off and find their friends, but the parents often just stood around and chatted until the bell rung and the children went inside to class. All the parents’ daily lives intersected in this one place, just outside the school. As missionaries, we find it helpful to think of this place as the “first setting” for those relationships. If parents were going to interact at all, it would be here. After the kids found their ways to class, all the parents would go their separate ways.

Not knowing anyone when we first moved there, we often skipped the social interaction with other parents and just headed off on our way for the day. My wife would typically use that time right after the drop off to go run errands. One day, though, Susan happened to run into one of the mothers of a child in the same school at the grocery store. As they passed each other in the aisle, they recognized each other from dropping off their children. Susan noticed something different about the way this other parent responded to her now that they were in a different context; the other mom had never talked to her at the schoolground but here at the grocery store, she was very open to striking up a conversation. They had something in common in this “second setting.” While their kids went to

the same school, which was the first setting for the relational encounter, this second setting was different. My wife—being the outgoing person she is—decided she would take the opportunity in this “second setting” to actually invite the mom to coffee on another day. This gave her a great opportunity to talk more deeply with the woman and get to know her better. They became friends, and she was able to share the gospel with her.

We noticed this pattern often in a variety of settings both outside our home country and in the states. The second setting gives us something in common with a person that we may not know well. Something about seeing someone in a different context than usual seems to take the relationship to new depths. As we live intentionally, we have tried to make the most of the second setting encounters as divine appointments from the Lord, thus inviting them into a deeper spiritual conversation.

We’ve found the “second setting principle” works with all sorts of relationships. The guy behind the counter serving coffee at our favorite coffee shop related to us in only the most professional ways until we connected with him while jogging at the park. In that second setting, he acted like we were old friends. Even our neighbors seemed relationally distant until we crossed paths at the mall, where we had a great discussion about all the challenges they’re facing in their family life. We offered, and they asked us to pray for them in public!

If we can be intentional to connect with people not only in the initial, first setting but also in a second setting, we may see deeper connections that build trust and familiarity. The result

is greater opportunities to talk about things that really matter, like the gospel.

2. *Invite someone out for coffee.* As you think about the conversations that you are having in your daily life, consider how you might move those conversations from superficial niceties to something deeper, more personal, and more gospel-oriented.

We find the challenge is trying to get from the first setting that we have with them to a deeper, more personal conversation that would last longer than a trip to our local market. We find a great place that works for us is having a conversation over a cup of coffee. As we get to know people and genuinely want to be friends with them and care for them relationally, we try to find a not-so-weird way to invite them into our lives, and usually that is a cup of coffee.

As we've mentioned, my wife and I (Larry) love coffee and we have our first cup of coffee first thing in the morning, but we try to be super intentional about inviting people to our next cup of coffee during the day. We have found in our city that people normally break for coffee between nine and eleven in the morning. This is a great time in their day for us to meet and it gives us the chance to have a much-needed additional cup of coffee that day. We know that during the work week it is difficult to invite people into your home during the day, but meeting them over coffee or for a meal is much more attainable for their daily routine. More importantly, something as neutral as drinking coffee gives us a chance to relate and get into deeper conversations and ask good questions. We try to include Jesus in our lives as part of our conversations early in the relationship.

3. Practicing hospitality. When we talk about hospitality, we often think of inviting people over to our house or apartment. For some of us, this makes us think about how our home needs to be clean, well-stocked, and perfect for entertaining. My challenge with this is that this view does not give me much space to feel hospitable because it takes so much effort to prepare. So we try to just be ready to invite people not only to our small apartment but even more so invite people into our lives.

Where I (Larry) live, it is not very common to invite someone to your place early in a friendship. We love having people to our house but in our current culture, this is not practiced until much later in the relationship. In our urban setting, life is lived outside, in restaurants, and in bars. It is far more common and natural to invite people for a coffee or appetizer at a local establishment than to invite them to my house. Because it fits with the rhythms of the community in which we live, we often invite people out for a snack or coffee.

In your setting, it may be common practice to invite people to your place and practice hospitality in that way. We have friends in Tennessee who have built an “outdoor living room” in their back yard—complete with a mini-kitchen, comfortable sofas, speakers for music, and a fire pit—just for the purpose of entertaining friends! I sometimes wish we could do more of that. The point is finding the place that works within your own cultural setting and being hospitable.

The benefit of living and working in an urban area is the ability to take advantage of the work rhythms and thus break rhythms. People love to go get coffee at certain times during the

day. Scheduling something during a natural break and going to them to make it convenient goes a long way. As I mentioned before, I am a coffee drinker, but when I go with someone to a tea shop, I have had to learn to appreciate a good cup of hot tea.

My wife and I have found with couples that we are not often able to make it onto their calendar for Friday nights or Saturday or Sunday during the daytime. These are reserved for their closer friends and family. But they may be more open to a Monday or Tuesday night. We try not to compete with their existing calendar but to compliment it. If they are night people, we schedule at night and sometimes super late. I struggle with being up late. I seem to lose coherency the later it gets, but I have learned it is not always about my preferences but about making the most of the opportunities the Lord has given me. We pray daily for opportunities that we may have to share our life and the gospel with those we encounter. We pray to be sensitive to the Spirit's leading and obedient to his promptings. How do we determine how God is leading us? We will help answer that in the next chapter.